candidates appearing for interviews after all India competitive examinations, the question of giving rail travel concession is under consideration.

Setting up of Export Council in Cooperative sector

1105. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is under Government's consideration to set up an Export Council within the Co-operative sector;

(b) whether the proposal is expected to be implemented during the year 1991-92;

(c) if so, the steps taken so far in the matter; and

(d) what other steps are being taken by Government to enable the Co-operative Sector to participate effectively in the Export trade?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI JAYANTILAL VIRCHANDBHAI SHAH): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) In view (a & b) above, Question does not arise.

(d) In addition to export incentives such as Cash Compensatory Support, Duty Draw Back System. Advance Import Licence, Duty Exemption Scheme being extended among others to the cooperatives, National Agricultural, Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) has been appointed as a canalising agency for export of onion and alongwith Tribal Cooperative Federation (TRIFED) for export of Nigerseed.

Risk and Hazard Scheme

1106. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a memorandum dated the 17th December, 1990, from Indian Railway Traction Workers Association.

(b) whether in the explanatory note attached to the above memorandum the Association has discussed the issue of covering traction staff under 'risk and hazard scheme';

(c) if so, what are the salient features of their argument in favour of covering the traction staff under 'Risk and Hazard Scheme'; and

(d) whether Government are reviewing their demand in the light of the facts that traction workers do work under grave risks?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) No, Sir. However, a memorandum dated 20-8-89 was received from the Association.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The salient feature of the demand is that Traction staff have to work under high voltage traction lines and because of the electromagnetic effect, their health deteriorates in the long run.

(d) The Government have considered their demand. Traction staff do not work under High Voltage conditions. Before starting any work on the Traction equipment, power supply is switched off and the equipment is properly earthed. Hence there is no particular hazard involved in this working. The staff therefore do not fulfil the criteria/guidelines laid down by the Department of Personnel and Training for grant of Risk Allowance.

Manufacture of Portions at Alambagh, Lucknow

1107. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Northern Railway Plant for manufacture of portions situated at Alambagh (Lucknow) is still operating:

(b) if so, its share in the volume of sale to the Indian Railways of Thermit Portions produced annually in comparison